

Issue — 5

Unfinished

Manual

OW-WOW.

Patented July 5 1892



and October 4 1892

Fall 2015

Manual



—Directions—

Sew up the sides and head
and stuff with cotton.
Cut paste board
oval to fit
bottom piece,
then sew
together.



Manual

224 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903
United States
Manual@risd.edu
risdmuseum.org

Issue — 5 / Fall 2015 / *Unfinished*

RISD Museum director: John W. Smith
Manual Editor-in-chief: Sarah Ganz Blythe
with S. Hollis Mickey
Editor: Amy Pickworth
Art direction: Derek Schusterbauer
Graphic designer: Brendan Campbell
Photographer: Erik Gould
(unless otherwise noted)
Printer: Meridian

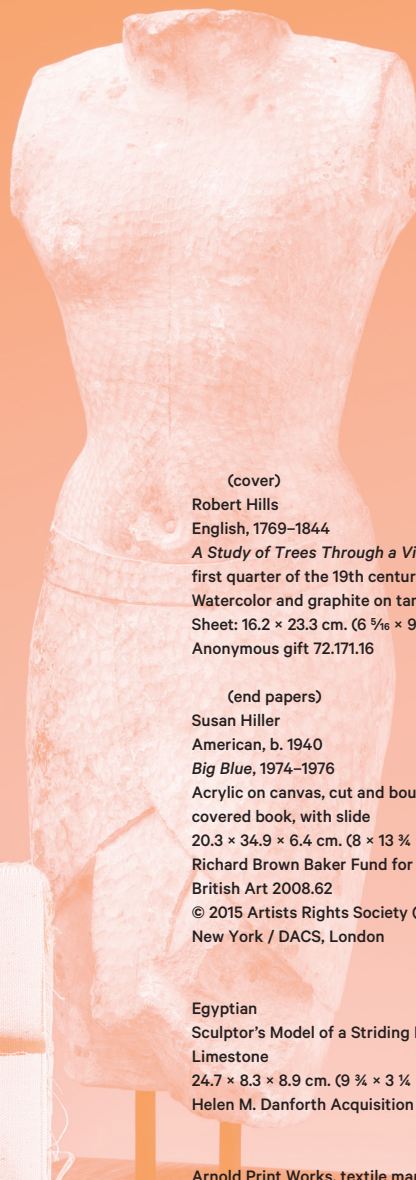
Special thanks to Denise Bastien, Gina Borromeo, A. Will Brown, Laurie Brewer, Linda Catano, Erik Gould, Sionan Guenther, Jan Howard, Kate Irvin, Dominic Molon, Ingrid Neuman, Maureen C. O'Brien, Emily Peters, Alexandra Poterack, Glenn Stinson, and Elizabeth A. Williams.

This issue of *Manual* is supported in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional generous support is provided by the RISD Museum Associates and Sotheby's.

Manual: a journal about art and its making (ISSN 2329-9193) is produced twice yearly by the RISD Museum.

Contents © 2015 Museum of Art,
Rhode Island School of Design

Manual is available at RISD WORKS (risdworks.com) and as a benefit of RISD Museum membership. Learn more at risdmuseum.com. Back issues can be found online at issuu.com/risdmuseum. Funds generated through the sales of *Manual* support educational programs at the RISD Museum.



(cover)

Robert Hills
English, 1769–1844
A Study of Trees Through a Vignette,
first quarter of the 19th century
Watercolor and graphite on tan paper
Sheet: 16.2 × 23.3 cm. (6 5/16 × 9 1/8 in.)
Anonymous gift 72.171.16

(end papers)

Susan Hiller
American, b. 1940
Big Blue, 1974–1976
Acrylic on canvas, cut and bound in
covered book, with slide
20.3 × 34.9 × 6.4 cm. (8 × 13 3/4 × 2 1/2 in.) (closed)
Richard Brown Baker Fund for Contemporary
British Art 2008.62
© 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York / DACS, London

Egyptian
Sculptor's Model of a Striding King, 305–250 BCE
Limestone
24.7 × 8.3 × 8.9 cm. (9 3/4 × 3 1/4 × 3 1/2 in.)
Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2014.2

Arnold Print Works, textile manufacturer
American, 1861–1942
Bow-Wow (pattern for a pillow), 1892
Cotton plain weave; printed
44.5 × 61 cm. (17 1/2 × 24 in.)
Museum Works of Art Fund 43.538



Arnold Print Works, textile manufacturer
American, 1861-1942
Bow-Wow (pattern for a pillow), 1892
Cotton plain weave; printed
44.5 × 61 cm. (17 1/2 × 24 in.)
Museum Works of Art Fund 43.538

Jen Bervin is a Brooklyn-based visual artist and writer whose works combine text and textiles with strong conceptual elements and a minimalist's eye for the poetic and essential.

Jean Blackburn is a professor in the Illustration Department at RISD. She has shown her paintings and sculptures both nationally and internationally and is working on an outdoor installation that will be exhibited in the fall of 2016.

Gina Borrromeo is the curator of ancient art at the RISD Museum, where her most recent project was the reinstallation of the Egyptian collection. Her research interests include ancient sculpture, museology, and cultural property.

Laurie Brewer is the associate curator of costume and textiles at the RISD Museum. Her most recent projects were *Golden Glamour: The Edith Stuyvesant Vanderbilt Gerry Collection* and *Indische Style: Batiks for the International Market* (both 2015).

A. Will Brown is the RISD Museum's curatorial assistant of contemporary art. His work features emerging contemporary artists with a particular focus on film, video, and new media. His most recent project was *Steffani Jemison: Maniac Chase, Escaped Lunatic, and Personal* (2015).

Bolaji Campbell is a professor in the History of Art and Visual Culture Department at RISD, and he also serves as that department's head. He is the author of the book *Painting for the Gods: Art and Aesthetics of Yoruba Religious Murals* (Africa World Press, 2008).

Dennis Congdon is a professor in RISD's Painting Department and a fellow of the American Academy in Rome. His work *Hummocks* was included in the Foster Prize exhibition this spring at the ICA Boston, and a show of his new paintings opens in September 2015 in Chelsea at Zieher Smith & Horton.

Jeremy Deller is an English artist whose conceptually based work combines references to pop and traditional culture with expanded notions of "folk" culture to comment on contemporary life. Deller won the 2004 Turner Prize and in 2013 represented the UK at the Venice Biennale.

Jan Howard is the chief curator at the RISD Museum, where she serves as the Houghton P. Metcalf Jr. Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs. Howard's work focuses on modern and contemporary art, and her most recent project was *Drawing Ambience: Alvin Boyarsky and the Architectural Association* (2014/2015).

Kate Irvin is the head curator of costume and textiles at the RISD Museum. Her recent exhibitions range from men's fashion to Islamic clothing, and upcoming shows include *All of Everything: Todd Oldham Fashion and Repair: Thrift to Resistance*. With Laurie Brewer, she authored *Artist/Rebel/Dandy: Men of Fashion* (Yale University Press, 2013).

Maureen C. O'Brien, the curator of painting and sculpture at the RISD Museum, is a specialist in nineteenth-century American and European painting. Author of *Edgar Degas: Six Friends at Dieppe*, O'Brien has a particular interest in the personal relationships between artists and their subjects.

Emily J. Peters is the associate curator of prints, drawing, and photographs at the RISD Museum, where she is currently working on an exhibition of the museum's collection of Netherlandish art. Her research interests include print culture, performance, and artistic techniques in the graphic arts in early modern Europe.

Siebre Versteeg uses programming and other media to explore the implications of going digital. Recent exhibitions include LTD in Los Angeles, James Cohan Gallery in New York City, and the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC.

Elizabeth A. Williams is the David and Peggy Rockefeller Curator of Decorative Arts and Design at the RISD Museum. Her research interests include American and British silver from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, French faience, American and British interiors, chinoiserie, Japonisme, and the grotesque.

C.D. Wright is the author of more than a dozen books of poetry and prose; forthcoming Fall 2015 from Copper Canyon Press is *The Poet, The Lion, Talking Pictures, El Farolito, A Wedding in St. Roch, The Big Box Store, The Warp in the Mirror, Spring, Midnights, Fire & All*. Wright teaches at Brown University.

8	From the Files Instructions for Richard Long's <i>Mountainside Ellipse</i> A. Will Brown	32	Artist on Art <i>Iggy Pop Life-Drawing Class</i> Jeremy Deller
10	Double Takes Von Kobell's Shadowy <i>Woman in the Window</i> Jean Blackburn & Laurie Brewer	34	Object Lesson Jan Gossaert's <i>Adam and Eve, Unfinished</i> Emily J. Peters
	Ingres's Study in Three Parts Dennis Congdon & Maureen C. O'Brien	poster	Artist on Art <i>Untitled</i> Siebren Versteeg
	Fiona Banner's <i>Shy Nude</i> Jan Howard & C.D. Wright	45	Portfolio Loose Links & Clear Couplings
22	Artist on Art From <i>The Opal Seas</i> Jen Bervin / John C. Van Dyke verso: <i>For six hours it floods ; then for six hours, just as quietly abyss</i>	54	Object Lesson Identity Recovered Gina Borrromeo
24	Object Lesson Aesthetics, Meaning, and Function: The Pende Mask Interrupted Bolaji Campbell	61	How To Uncut Robes from the 1920s Kate Irvin

Unfinished

Loose threads unknotted. Ideas unrealized. Outlines left bare. Function unperformed. Patterns uncut. Luster removed with time and wear. We rarely examine unfinished things. The unfinished is easily overlooked in favor of the fully rendered and complete, but consider those sketchy lines, those fraying ends: the unfinished has potency. The unfinished offers evidence of process, reveals traces of technique, trembles with latent possibility.

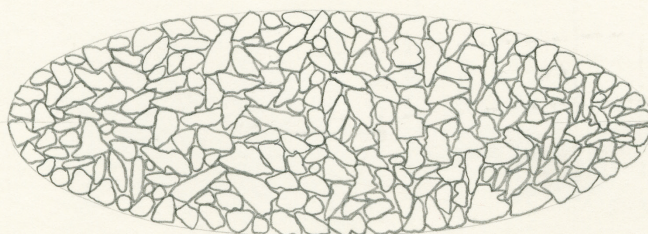
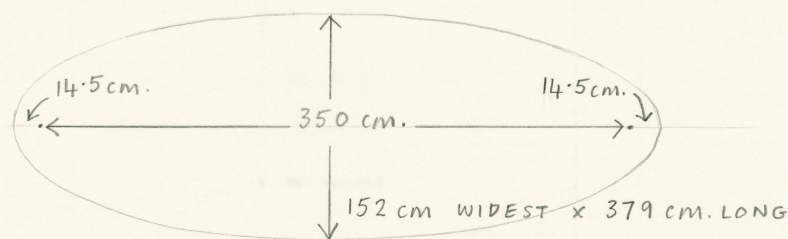
With such capacity, why is the unfinished so often neglected? Perhaps because the unfinished bears a kind of liminal status, suspended between conceptualized and wholly realized. In this way, unfinished things can be challenging to define, categorize, and interpret. We've all left something raw, unrefined, or without conclusion. Or perhaps time and circumstance have undone what was finished. Edges unravel with use; an object is taken out of the circulation, made separate from the function that makes it complete. [We are all uncomfortably familiar with the unfinished and the anxiety it provokes. But if we put those queasy sentiments aside for a moment, the unfinished has an allure, a sense of possibility. The original maker's hands may leave something undone, wear may erode the complete, or we as viewers and consumers may undo what has been done. In whatever way unfinishing occurs, the indeterminacy of unfinished things makes space for us to imagine how something was made, as well as multiple drafts of its completion. The unfinished leaves space for us make our own meaning in the margins. These pages hold errors, fragments, and undoings from across times and cultures that (un)make various meanings of the unfinished.] The essays, images, and projects presented in the fifth issue of *Manual* attend to the fluid potential of objects that are in some way incomplete.

The text within the brackets is supposed to look struck-through, perhaps by hand, to emphasize the unfinished/drafty capabilities of text, too.
Can you play around a little with this treatment in the next version?

Columns

Thanks.

From the [Files](#) pries open the archive, [Double Take](#) looks at one object two different ways, [Artist on Art](#) offers a creative response by an invited artist, [Object Lesson](#) exposes the stories behind objects, [Portfolio](#) presents a series of objects on a theme, [How To](#) explores the making of an object

CERTIFICATE**MOUNTAINSIDE ELLIPSE**

FIRST, AN ELLIPSE IS DRAWN ON THE FLOOR USING A LOOP OF STRING AROUND 2 POINTS. STARTING FROM ONE END, THE STONES ARE PLACED ONE BY ONE IN A SINGLE LAYER, IN A HAPHAZARD PATTERN, TO COMPLETELY FILL IN THE ELLIPSE. THE STONES ARE CLOSELY PACKED TOGETHER, TOUCHING, A FEW CAN BE OVERLAPPING. THE SMALLEST STONES CAN BE SLOTTED AND WEDGED INTO GAPS AND SPACES. EACH STONE IS PLACED ON ITS FLATTEST, MOST STABLE SIDE. THE STONES ARE CHOSEN AT RANDOM, ALTHOUGH WITH A FAIRLY EVEN MIX OF SIZES THROUGHOUT THE WORK. THE EDGE STONES SHOULD BE CHOSEN AS PARTICULARLY STABLE ONES, AND THE VERY LARGEST STONES ARE DISTRIBUTED WITHIN THE WORK AND NOT AT THE EDGE. OVERALL THERE IS AN EVEN-LOOKING DENSITY OF STONES THROUGHOUT. THERE ARE SOME EXTRA STONES. THE WORK SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AS CLEAN AND DUST-FREE AS POSSIBLE. IT IS AN INDOOR OR OUTDOOR WORK, BUT ALWAYS PLACED ON A FLAT SURFACE. N.B. THIS CERTIFICATE SHOWS PROCEDURE ONLY; IT CANNOT ITSELF BE "COPIED." IT IS NOT AN ARTWORK AND SHOULD NOT BE REPRODUCED.

ATHENS 1999



From the Files

Instructions for Richard Long's *Mountainside Ellipse*
by A. Will Brown

Gathered in Athens, Greece, the irregularly shaped rocks that comprise Richard Long's *Mountainside Ellipse* evoke an experience of the natural world that is somewhere between the organic and the constructed. The placement of the rocks into the large oval form they take on the floor of the gallery is dictated by the artist through the set of instructions reproduced here. Each time the work is displayed, *Mountainside Ellipse* changes, as the rocks lilt at ever-so-slightly different angles and positions, replicating as closely as possible the original layout and the artist's instructions.

It is the tension between our associations with the permanence or timelessness of the natural world and the forced timelessness of art objects that Long presents through his instructions. Amidst the balance between the variations on and permanence of the instructions, the work retains a specific conceptual form that conveys a common experience. The experience of being in a natural setting governed by the transience, mutability, and subtle irregularities of the landscape is a transformative one that is itself often taken for granted. Long was keenly aware that nature maintains itself through change and growth, while conservation maintains artworks through alteration and the deadening of change, bringing decay—and nature—as close to a halt as possible.

Richard Long
English, b. 1945
Mountainside Ellipse, 1999
Stones
15.9 x 379.1 x 152.1 cm.
(6 1/4 x 149 1/4 x 59 7/8 in.)
Richard Brown Baker Fund for
Contemporary British Art 2007.107
© 2015 Richard Long. All Rights
Reserved, DACS, London / ARS, NY

Wilhelm von Kobell
 German, 1766–1853
Woman in the Window (Frau am Fenster),
 after 1818
 Oil and graphite on paper
 37.8 × 26.5 cm. (14 7/8 × 10 3/8 in.)
 Museum Membership Fund 68.133

Double

Laurie Brewer /
 Jean Blackburn

Take

Fall 2015

Manual

Laurie Brewer: This work by Wilhelm von Kobell provides, in fastidious attention to detail, a perfect representation of the early Biedermeier style, popular in central Europe from about 1814 to 1824 and associated with simplicity and the celebration of middle-class comfort and home life. Von Kobell, trained in the Dutch tradition of Vermeer, was an artist known for his exacting style, so the unfinished state of this painting raises many questions to which we have no answers. It does, however, allow for free interpretation of the woman's dress within the understood silhouette of the era.

Here a rusty terra-cotta base is overlaid with gray and green—a popular palette of the early Biedermeier—to create a modest interior, in which domestic work is suggested by the outline of a butter churn. At the window a woman and dog obediently wait, depicted in sketched outline. The work's unfinished state makes it more compelling, and suggests a quote by 20th-century German writer Walter Benjamin: “The interior is not just the universe, but also the container of the private individual. To dwell means to leave traces.” From my perspective as a fashion historian, to decode this painting's traces is to seek clues about the clothing the ghostly woman in the window might have chosen for herself.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, the white cotton or linen *lingerie* or *chemise à la reine* style of dress was made popular by Marie Antoinette; soon women throughout Europe were openly wearing

garments that had only recently been considered underwear, or were still the attire of prostitutes. By the early nineteenth century, the Empire style of dress—its classical inspirations manifested in a narrow, pure-white columnar silhouette—had been adopted across Europe and America.

The Biedermeier style of dress developed in Germany as a regional response to the Empire style in Western Europe, and shortly thereafter evolved into the Romantic era. Fashion historian Regina Karner writes that clothing of the early Biedermeier capitalized “on the simplicity of the Empire period: straightforward, high-waisted, with a deep décolleté and long narrow sleeves slightly puffed at the shoulder. The gently flaring skirt had a tie or ribbon-pull closure at the back . . . [importantly,] the dominant fashion color was white.”¹ Daytime dress might see the décolleté covered by fine linen fichus or sheer batiste scarves, but the silhouette's emphasis on the bosom reflects contemporary discussions regarding the “natural” female body and motherhood, especially as addressed in the eighteenth-century writings of philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau.²

The absence of color in the figure of the woman evokes the era's white gossamer linen and cotton fabrics, which possessed names such as *vapeur*. Because of the garments' extreme transparency, to wear them was often to be described as “undressed,” which presents an affinity with the unfinished quality of this work.



¹ Regina Karner, "Clothing," in Hans Ottomeyer, Klaus Albrecht Schröder, and Laurie Winters (eds.) *Biedermeier: The Invention of Simplicity* (Milwaukee and Ostfildern, Germany: Milwaukee Art Museum and Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2006), 246.

² Rousseau's writings on the "cult of nature" inspired Biedermeier artists as well as treatises on motherhood and the natural art of breastfeeding.



Jean Blackburn: We have no title or date for this work by Wilhelm von Kobell, found in his studio at the time of his death. Known for his depictions of figures on horseback and soldiers doing battle, Von Kobell rarely painted interior scenes. The shadowed wall, the window that pierces it, and the landscape beyond are carefully and completely rendered in great detail. As the viewer, we stand back in the room, our eye level the same as the woman whose back is to us. She addresses a large dog sitting so high on a surface that they are eye to eye. In turn, the dog looks out into the landscape. The prominence of the dog is remarkable; this is no cringing lapdog. The dog and the woman are presented as near equals. Though we might expect them to be the main focus, they are only delineated with the most delicate hint of white chalk and pencil. The brick red underpainting defines their silhouettes boldly against the cool tones of the landscape. The interior space is not defined at all.

Von Kobell bets his marbles on the landscape. The delicate gray and blue glazes that make up the wall and the landscape shimmer slightly as they interact with the red underpainting. Against the warm tone, the cloud cover is a cool gray, sullen even. With foliage on the tree and the verdant plain stretching to a horizon of low mountains, the season appears to be spring or summer. Careful perspectival analysis finds Von Kobell did not use consistent vanishing points for the hinged windows, which are not wide enough for such large window frames, and this allows him to emphasize the open windows, the landscape beyond, and the large cross that defines the framework of the window. The Romantic mingling of religion and nature is subtle but unavoidable.

Wilhelm von Kobell
German, 1766–1853
Woman in the Window (Frau am Fenster) (detail),
after 1818
Oil and graphite on paper
37.8 × 26.5 cm. (14 7/8 × 10 3/8 in.)
Museum Membership Fund 68.133

Take

Laurie Brewer /
Jean Blackburn

But why didn't Von Kobell develop the figures and the interior space? The painting embodies a rupture between inside and out, interior space and landscape. The window divides finished from unfinished. The dog and woman stand before the open window and look into the landscape. Likewise, we mirror them as we look into the illusionistic "window" of the painting itself. In their unfinished state, the woman and the dog function as symbols—the feminine and the animal—each powerful but enclosed, each considering freedom. It seems likely that Von Kobell chose not to paint the interior because he needed it only as a foil to the landscape: interiority, not interior. He wanted to focus on the act of looking out at nature, its limitless expanse, and Romanticism's concept of nature as visible spirit.¹

Romanticism also emphasized the notion of becoming, form in flux, rather than the rational and knowable. Whether Von Kobell intended it or not, this painting, in its unfinished state, requires us to participate in imagining, completing. For him it may have been a Romantic impulse. Perhaps ours is more a postmodern appreciation of an unfinished work, but its admission of instability, its own fabrication, and our active involvement in completing it allow for unexpected resonance.

¹ John C. Blankenagel, "Publications of the Modern Language Association of America" LV, no. 1 (March 1940): 6.





Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
 French, 1780–1867
 Studies of a head of a man, hands of
 Saint John for Christ Offering Saint
 Peter the Keys to Paradise, and
 hooded Capuchin monk, ca. 1817–1820
 Oil on canvas
 45.1 x 32.4 cm. (17 3/4 x 12 3/4 in.)
 Purchased with funds from the
 Bequest of Maria Dasdagulian in honor
 of Joseph Fazzano 2012.1

Double

Take

Dennis Congdon /
 Maureen C. O'Brien

Fall 2015

Dennis Congdon: From the very first, the light on the face and clasped hands pulls us forward, but as we approach we are suddenly struck by the dissonance of a whole cobbled together from quite separate parts, and cobbled in no simple way. To see the distinct elements of head, hands, and monk's cowl separately, we must turn the painting on its head once, twice. But to take in the wonderful dissonance, at such odds as it is with the fall of light nearly capable of pulling the three elements into a single ensemble in a believable space, we must put the canvas back on the wall in Ingres's studio. We must because we are looking at a study which would have taken its place on a wall which was itself structured similarly.

On the studio wall, dozens of other small canvas studies would have been hung in close proximity, crowded together, each a cluster of elements under consideration. Larger and better lit expanses of wall were saved for big commissioned canvases underway, but on this wall in the painter's periphery, fragments accrue and an eclectic whole emerges. As one of these small canvases is pulled down and added to, it might be put back in a new spot, inviting new interactions with new neighboring canvases. The connections between studies and the images in on them are not only loose, but shifting and changing. Collision and juxtaposition becomes a new liveliness, out of which can come a more ambitious unity, a way of looking aslant. Structures can emerge that in being unpredictable are therefore unconventional and fresh.

In this work, Ingres can be seen planning a preparatory study. This is not an *ébauche*. It is not underpainted, but we see the artist preparing the ground that precedes the *ébauche*. He invents characters and characteristics, fragments that will become parts—moving parts—of a work he is staging. It is as if in preparing to work from life, he must first create that life. Allowing the painted images freedom to move relative to one another much as living beings, sliding in front of one another, slipping behind one another, blocking one another from view wholly or in part—from these occlusions and buttings-up came the liveliness and strangeness of composition he sought. Things look this way now; at another time things will look different. Ingres brought this provisionality to an intense level, and in big, ambitious, multifigure compositions he contrasted his improvisational process of picture orchestration with a glazed *grisaille*, resulting in works both remarkably lively and timeless.

These dynamics are what Ingres so admired in the works of Raphael and Perugino, produced in studios in which apprentices worked in all corners and the Master oversaw studies as ably as he painted. As we view RISD's Ingres study, it is important for us to imagine Ingres imagining the Renaissance studio, where many pieces of larger works were in development at once—in this corner, heads are studied; here, hands and feet; under these windows, the fall of light on drapery.

Working by himself, Ingres embraced a studio process that nonetheless created unpredictable juxtapositions and improvisations.

Manual

Maureen C. O'Brien: Half in shadow, the masklike features of this dark, bearded man appear in high relief, his deep-set eyes gaze as if in a trance. The mood of detachment is shattered by two delicate hands that extend from a red slash at the base of his throat, their steepled fingers pointing down. The inverted gesture of prayer insinuates a religious theme, as does the fragment of a monk's hood that appears when the painting is turned ninety degrees clockwise. Unraveling these interwoven elements offers insights into Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's studio practice and suggests the fluid imagination that powered his intimidating technique.



Ingres was a prolific draftsman whose sketches and preparatory drawings included numerous groupings of body parts or poses. In RISD's composite oil study, the figural elements are notably dissimilar but they indicate three areas of interest that preoccupied Ingres throughout his career. The most prominent of these is the study of the head, emblematic of Ingres's mastery of portraiture and a reference to his excellence at *têtes d'expression*, an academic exercise devised to perfect the representation of individual emotions. Ingres may have intended this head for one of the apostles represented in an altarpiece depicting *Christ Giving the Keys to Saint*

Peter, which he completed in 1820 in Rome, but it is absent from the finished work. Its uncanny stare alienates it from that painting's spiritual dialogue and recalls the troubled temperaments of characters in Ingres's classical history paintings. Although idealized, it also evokes Ingres's own youthful likeness and the handsome portraits of swarthy men that he painted while in Rome.

The hands speak to Ingres's fascination with gesture, and can be securely identified as those of the apostle John in the Roman altarpiece commission. Compared to the somber masculinity of the head, the delicate character of the hands is striking. They are distinctly feminine, imbuing the study with an idiosyncratic sensuality that is characteristic of Ingres's art. When repositioned upright and integrated with the disciple's tender demeanor, the softly rounded fingers project a submissive reverence that prefigured Ingres's depictions of the Virgin Mary. By 1820, Ingres had appropriated John's prayerful pose and reintroduced it as a signature motif in recurring Marian imagery.

The third segment of the painting relates to a theme that Ingres developed during this period. Precise rendering of costume was essential to his concept of finish, and it also heightened his appeal to collectors of religious genre paintings. Between 1814 and 1820, Ingres made a group of narrative paintings depicting Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel. In preparation, he studied embroidered liturgical vestments as well as the brown woolen habits worn by the Capuchin monks, which provided a shadowy contrast to the pageantry of the Vatican. In this instance, the obscured mouth and chin register a vaguely sinister impression that heightens the pictorial effect of the composite study.

The union of these ostensibly unrelated fragments is more striking because of Ingres's apparent desire to preserve the evidence of all three. Their future usefulness as sources may be only partial justification for the coexistence of the parts. In their strange interaction, they function as an intentional, if uneasy, ensemble, representative of an artist who pushed content and technique as a means to heightened visual stimulation.

An expanded version of this essay can be found at rismuseum.org/obrien_ingres.

Fiona Banner
English, b. 1966
Shy Nude, 2007
Graphite on white paper, spray paint
on brown paper, aluminum frame
Frame: 128.3 × 88.3 cm. (50 ½ × 34 ¾ in.)
Richard Brown Baker Fund for
Contemporary British Art 2009.11
© Fiona Banner

Double

Jan Howard /
C.D. Wright

Take

Fall 2015

Manual

Jan Howard: A frame sits on the floor in the corner with what seems to be the front of the work turned to the wall. Visible to the viewer is the cursive text *Shy Nude*, stenciled onto the brown paper backing. In this intriguing work, Fiona Banner encourages the viewer's curiosity with a placement that allows a peek at the other side. If someone were bold enough, they might even approach a guard about seeing the side facing the wall. The artist is keen that a viewer must cross a boundary in order to see the work completely.¹ For most viewers, their experience remains unfinished, as they may not have the inquisitiveness or the audacity to ask to see more.

In a museum setting, a label might describe what is on the other side of the piece. The last time this work was on view at the RISD Museum, the label said, in part, "*Shy Nude* teases us by suggesting an image on the other side. In fact, there is a drawing . . . in words rather than image. . . . Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the work is that the writing is visually compelling. The weight of her pencil even creates a ghostly figurative image through the center of the text."

Shy Nude is from a series of works in which the artist extends the tradition of drawing from the nude model using language instead of imagery. The series also challenges some of the ideas surrounding the depiction of the nude. Banner stated, "I wanted to work from the nude, but did not want to deal, or could not deal with the weight of history that comes with the image. Through bypassing the image and using words, I can circumnavigate this history—not ignore it, but move around it, and not be consumed by it. And then

ultimately I'm more dexterous in words, and can say something about the changing of the situation over a duration—the color, light, pose."²

While it is a vastly different experience to see this work in reproduction instead of in the gallery, here we can fully present both sides of *Shy Nude*. As we read the text, we see the figure through the artist's mind seemingly in real time as she transcribes how her eyes move over the body. We are made aware of the difficulty the model has in holding the pose, and how the artist sees the most intimate areas of the model's body.

Even if one only experiences the work in the gallery without knowing the full text, the title of the work alone signals Banner's interest in exploring the fraught, voyeuristic aspects of working from the nude. *Shy Nude* speaks to the model's and perhaps the artist's discomfort with this practice.³ *What is the power dynamic in the studio? How do you acknowledge the sexual aspects of this intimate observation by the artist and then by the viewer when the work is displayed? What does it mean to take something created in private and bring it into the public realm?* As a curator, I'm drawn to this work precisely for the questions it asks, including how much information the artist needs to provide to achieve her objective.

¹ Email correspondence between the author and the artist through her representative, Charlotte Schepke, Frith Street Gallery, London, November 3, 2008. The sturdiness of the frame intentionally allows for handling.

² Fiona Banner in interview with Gregory Burke, "In Dialogue," *The Bastard Word*. Toronto: The Power Plant and London: The Vanity Press, 2007, 5.

³ Ibid., 9.





Fiona Banner
 English, b. 1966
Shy Nude, 2007
 Graphite on white paper, spray paint
 on brown paper, aluminum frame
 Frame: 128.3 × 88.3 cm. (50 ½ × 34 ¾ in.)
 Richard Brown Baker Fund for
 Contemporary British Art 2009.11
 © Fiona Banner

Take Double

Jan Howard /
 C.D. Wright

C.D. Wright: Title and image are one and the same.

The picture is viewed (first) from the back, struts exposed. The focal center, two scripted words: *shy nude*. On the reverse, the default front, is a scrupulously hand-printed description of the art work we are to bring into being by reading, that is if we boldly—touch and turn the picture around to view a paper of words in graphite. A spectral figure may be willed legible where the lettering pales and a shadow stirs.

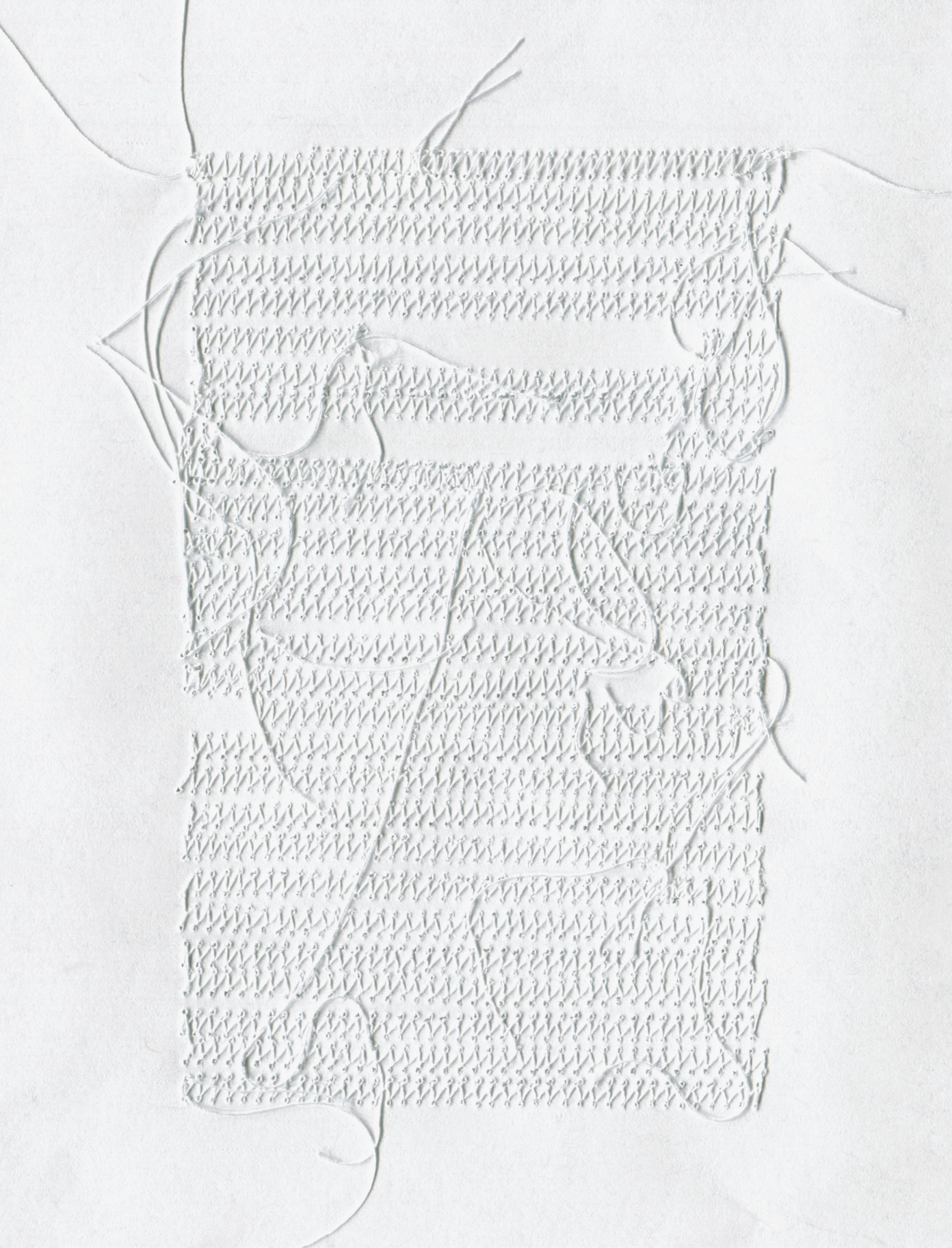
The complete text, which also doubles as the picture plane on the reverse (what would have been the front) is a translation. Attenuated, meticulous, tedious, erotic. The latter is true if you accept that in a clothed society the disrobed are intrinsically erotic, even unpictured ones.

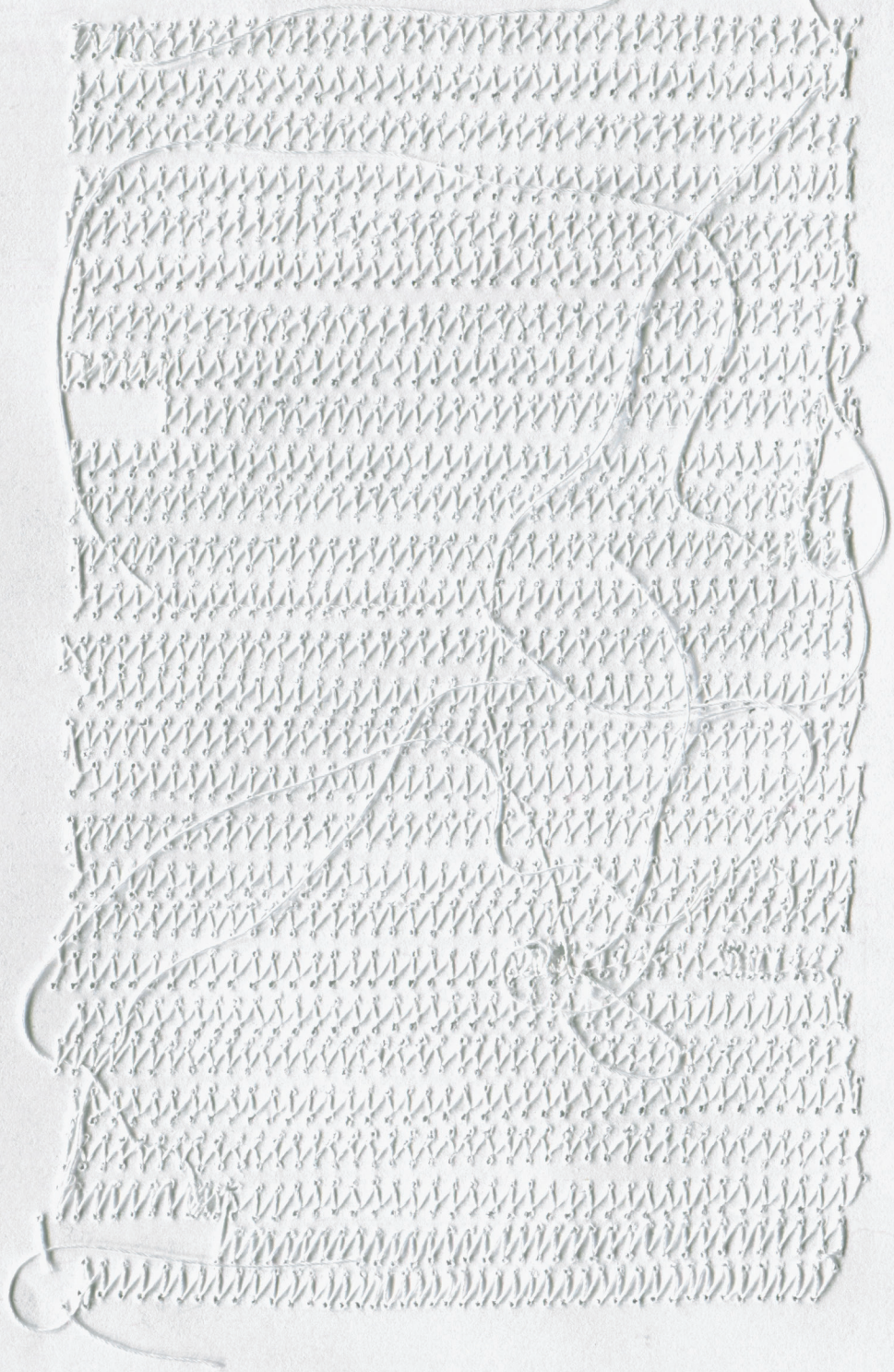
Shy nude is moving in and out of her own space, turning ever more inward the further down her body we scan. We are penetrating her space, but we are, after all, here to look. *She* is composed of words. We are authorized to peep behind the picture of two words and skim through her *oeuvre* (*de corps*). We are made shyer by her shyness, a tad aroused, and a bit bored (a near requirement of the conceptual). We strain to read the entire sheet, too time-consuming an effort for a viewer. Museum-goers keep walking or else stop to decipher each line and suffer others going between them and *her* else stepping around her readers. *She* is on her feet, looking up showing the whites of her eyes (Jean D’Arc-esque); does not

return our scrutiny; yet we are drawn inexorably downward to *the darkest deepest shadow falling through her thighs*.

She is on her feet. A vein in her thigh throbs; she is breathing (through the mouth), thinking. The social animals we almost are; the solitaires we deeply are. The model, opaquest of thinkers. Blood rushes toward her fingertips, a crease twitches, her ears blush, arms sway, hips. Her chest trembles, she sweats, shifts her weight. Knees tense. Light and shadows adjust to her trembling buttock, her lifting eyebrow. Shadows conform to available light. The palette does not transfer readily into words. *She* is the one that is alive in this graphic gloss of vibrating words.

In actual paintings of actual nudes, the models often appear corpselike, positioned by the painter to stay put. Forever if necessary. John Berger famously observed that a nude has to be an object to be a nude. Analyzing the body of the female subject is an inexhaustible task, because the body has the power to elicit every emotion and sensation of which the species is capable. Then, there is the non-attainable, inalienable aspect of a living body, represented by a cryptic set of symbols, wherein the subject is alive, eyes wide open, fully aware, thinking. We haven’t a fleck of insight into what *our* introvert is thinking, utterly disinterested in us. *Moving in and out of her own space*, this true-to-life drawing.







Aesthetics, Meaning, and Function

The Pende Mask Interrupted

Bolaji Campbell

The mask is the quintessential icon and metaphor for collaboration. Masks make things happen. In many African cultures, the mask functions as a catalyst for communal renewal and festivities, an unfinished generative artistic enterprise uniting several individuals in unending acts of improvisation and creative dialogue—carvers, painters, weavers, dancers, singers, drummers, designers, critics, and of course the audience.

25

✓

68

Issue—5

FIG. 1

Giwoyo Mbuya Mask, mid-20th century
Pende Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Wood, raffia, cloth, and pigment
53.34 × 25.4 × 16.5 cm. (21 × 10 × 6 ½ in.)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bayard LeRoy King 78.147.6

Aside from those moments when the cultural object is in use, the mask is never complete. Once it leaves the workshop of the carver, it assumes a life of its own, uniting and engaging multiple individuals in artistic creativity and dialogic reflections. First to the painter, thereafter to the textile weaver and designer and finally to the otherworldly performer who must of necessity transform the object into a magical tool through which the needed presence of the departed is re-envisioned. Constantly in need of revitalization and renewal of its potent energies, the mask must be repainted and imbued with spiritual powers of the spoken words whenever it is performed in the annual rituals that signal the return of the ancestors. Through repeated use, it will acquire a thick veneer of ritual offerings of food, oil, blood, and liquor in addition to the layers of colorful pigments on its ritually saturated surfaces.

With a prominent forehead decorated with three scarification patterns in white and a slightly tilted nose and angular eyes, this generic cap-like *Giwoyo mbuya* mask from the Pende culture of the Democratic Republic of the Congo would have been worn on top of the head almost in a diagonal fashion (Fig. 1). Attached to the top of the mask is an intricately woven dyed raffia wig. This style of mask has the distinction of being perhaps the only one worn on top of the head among the Pende, and quite possibly the only one that is performed in the bush, on the fringes of the human community (Fig. 2). This fiercely terrifying image of an aggressive male¹ is further augmented by a sharply articulated raffia-beard which cascades down in alternating torrents of black and white triangular patterns. The mask embodies the collective spirit of the ancestors and is often employed in disguising the physical appearance of otherworldly performers who descend into the human community during the initiation of young boys in Pende society, or simply as part of the rituals heralding the spirit of a recently deceased on their journeys away from the world of the living.

Generically referred to as *mbuya* among the Pende, masks are usually created from a vast array of organic and inorganic substances, including wood, raffia, cotton fibers, plant seeds, natural pigments, feathers, animal bones, horns, and hides, as well as the detritus of contemporary society, like bullet shell casings and forged metal bells.² It is indeed a curious amalgam of several disparate elements which are further imbued with spiritual force and power.³ Additionally, masks are also classified into two distinct categories based on their material of manufacture: the *minganji* masks made with raffia, and the *mbuya* masks carved in wood. In the Bapende language of the Pende people, to celebrate a masquerade performance is to stage a “dance of mask”—a religio-mythical spectacle

FIG. 2

Khoshi Mahumbu dances the mask *Giwoyo*. Nyoka-Munene, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1989. © Z.S. Strother



that is at once evocative and provocative. Such performances are usually staged at the metaphoric crossroads—sites of precarious interactions where the living are reunited with the spirit of the departed. Accompanied with energetic dance steps and rhythmic drumming and music, the otherworldly performer takes the center stage in this communal event specially created to unite both the living and their departed ancestors. Every member of the audience participates, either by singing or gyrating to the rhythm of the drum—a truly festive atmosphere in the spirit of call and response, where both the ritual performers and the audience must collaborate in the ensuing cultural event.

According to the Pende, “the ‘mask’ is more than the object ([that is the sculptural wooden] headpiece) . . . it is even more than the headpiece together with a costume” (Strother, 1998: 172). It is multisensory, poly-vocal, and multimedia in scope and dimension. Characteristically, it visualizes myths, legends, and fantasies residing at the portal of the subconscious. In use, this example created an intensely enervating experience that would have engaged all our critical faculties: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. In 1978, however, this mask was given to the RISD Museum, and at least since that time its use as a ritual object and catalyst has been suspended. As part of the Museum’s collections, it is profoundly incomplete and unfinished, because it no longer functions as a cultural object.

Beginning with colonial incursion in the late 1800s, many museums and individuals across the Western world were assembling and displaying collections of African art. One of these institutions was the Trocadero Museum in Paris, established in 1878, where Picasso first encountered African art objects. Possibly captivated by the affective presence of the surreal, the supernatural, and the intriguing implicit in some of the ethnographic objects (and more specifically the Pende masks) that he encountered at the Trocadero, Picasso ingeniously brought the mask within the realm of European art by inserting it on the faces of three of the nude figures in his famous painting *Les Femmes d’Alger*, a revolutionary transformation which ultimately occasioned the birth of Cubism.

Given the prevailing ethnocentric biases of early 20th century, practically all non-Western art objects and cultural productions were regarded as inferior. As a result, Picasso initially denied ever being inspired by African art, but persistent critical acclaim regarding his bold

adaptation subsequently forced him to acknowledge it, even if he grudgingly framed it within a perceived notion of “black magic” and “idolatry”⁴:

Those masks weren't just pieces of sculpture like the rest, not in the least, they were magic things . . . these Negroes were intercessors . . . They were against everything; against unknown threatening spirits . . . I kept on staring at fetishes. Then it came to me. I too was against everything . . . I too felt that everything was unknown, hostile!

A number of Picasso's contemporaries began collecting African art and adapting its formal elements in their experimentation.⁵ In the end, many of these artists sought to explore that highly contested mystique or paradigm of the *exotic*, the *authentic*, and the *spontaneous* as a means of celebrating the conceptual sophistication implicit in non-Western cultures and artistic practices. Yet it was their collective ability

to contemplate and explore the uncanny and the less familiar that subsequently liberated their artistic visions from the doldrums of European traditions, leading inexorably to the beginning of Modern art in Europe. The propelling force of that catalytic encounter was the *mbuya*.

Picasso created a new lexicon for European Modernist aesthetics. Placing his incredibly bold adaptation on the faces of prostitutes unwittingly trivialized or desecrated the spiritual meaning, function, and formal elements of the mask for its original creators and users. This same adaptation, with a host of other related issues, moved African art away from the curiosity cabinets of ethnographic and natural history museums unto the forefront of European art at the opening decades of the twentieth century. This intersection was even at that time immensely complicated, but Picasso undeniably struck the right chord with his incisive comment that “those masks weren't just pieces of sculpture like the rest.”

Indeed, within the Mukanda initiation schools among the Pende, the mask is the embodiment of



3

FIG. 3

Frank Gelett (1866–1951)
Pablo Picasso in his studio at the Bateau-Lavoir, 1908
 Repro-photo: Madeleine Coursaget
 Musée Picasso
 © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

tribal authority and power. It presents a valuable means of disseminating vital knowledge about tribal laws, civic responsibilities, and patriotism, of understanding the dynamic relationship with the unseen presence of the departed and instilling societal and moral values in children. The mask prepares initiates for their subsequent reentry into society and for the express purpose of assuming leadership positions in their communities.

As we examine this mask in the twenty-first century, some questions may elicit a more nuanced, engaging, and provocative interpretation, and may suggest answers that are compelling and profoundly troubling. What does the mask represent? How are ritual objects always “unfinished,” except when in use? How do objects such as this Pende mask function—and not function—within the context of a museum collection? Or in a publication such as this? What was—and is—the state of this object in the contexts of the *exotic*, the *authentic*, and the *spontaneous*? In several African societies the functional purpose of a ritual object is an important aesthetic criterion. For the Pende mask to be considered aesthetically pleasing to its users and creators, it must be actively functional and fully invested in its religio-social context.

The mask remains one of the most enduring cultural traditions in Africa. It provides a unique lens through which human response and continuous engagement with the environment can fully be contemplated and better interpreted, whether in terms of ancestor veneration, social control, education, or entertainment. Undoubtedly, the mask permeates every facet of human endeavors. Whether in the celebration of culture heroes and heroines or in the pursuit and punishment of aberrant antisocial behaviors, or perhaps in several life-crisis rituals including initiation, training, and preparation of youths for leadership positions, the mask occupies a preeminent place in the lived experience of the African imagination and in understanding the dynamic currents that shape our universe. It straddles that great divide between the real and the imagined, the concrete and the imperceptible, the serious and the playful, the whimsical and the terrifying, the living and the dead. To encounter the mask is to experience African cultural traditions in all their multilayered and complex dimensions, inviting us into a universe of knowledge production which intersects with religion, music, performance, philosophy, psychology, social practices, cultural history, and collective memory. Outside of that context, as a museum object, the mbuya remains at best a curiosity or more broadly a means of engaging a very complex cultural tradition during and beyond the period of European colonial encounter.

- 1 This aggressive stance is deliberately created to intimidate the young boys who are candidates for the rites of initiation.
- 2 All the itemized objects here refer in general to materials usually found on the costume of the masquerades.
- 3 See a fully costumed masker in Figure 2. It is not uncommon for the ritualized objects on the costume to assume spiritually charged magical powers.
- 4 Petrine Archer-Straw, *Negrophilia: Avant-Garde Paris and Black Culture in the 1920s* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2000), 52.
- 5 The avant garde artists in this group included Braque, Matisse, Derain, Modigliani, and Brancusi, among others.

Further Reading

Archer-Straw, Petrine. *Negrophilia: Avant-Garde Paris and Black Culture in the 1920s*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2000.

Grossman, Wendy. *Man Ray: African Art and the Modernist Lens*. New York: International Art and Artists, 2011.

Leighten, Patricia. "The White Peril and *L'Art nègre*: Picasso, Primitivism, and Anticolonialism," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 4 (December 1990).

Perry, Gill, Francis Frascina, and Charles Harrison. *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction: The Early Twentieth Century* (*Modern Art Practices and Debates series*). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Rubin, William. "*Primitivism*" in *20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984.

Strother, Z. S. *Inventing Masks: Agency and History in the Art of the Central Pende*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Willet, Frank. *African Art*. 3rd ed. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2003.

“I had this idea; it’s almost the kind of thing where, if I did it right, I wouldn’t have to make art ever again, or at least I felt that way at the time. The idea was to invite Iggy Pop to pose anonymously for a life-drawing class. A group of artists, some of whom wouldn’t necessarily know who he was, would be assembled and the resulting drawings would then have been donated to the Smithsonian Institution and preserved as a document of this man’s body and what it represents in terms of pop culture and popular music. These drawings, by Sarah Tynan, suggest what the outcome of the life-drawing class might have been.”

—Jeremy Deller

Jeremy Deller
Iggy Pop Life-Drawing Class, 2006–2011
Artist’s impression by Sarah Tynan
Photos: Stephen White
Courtesy of the artist



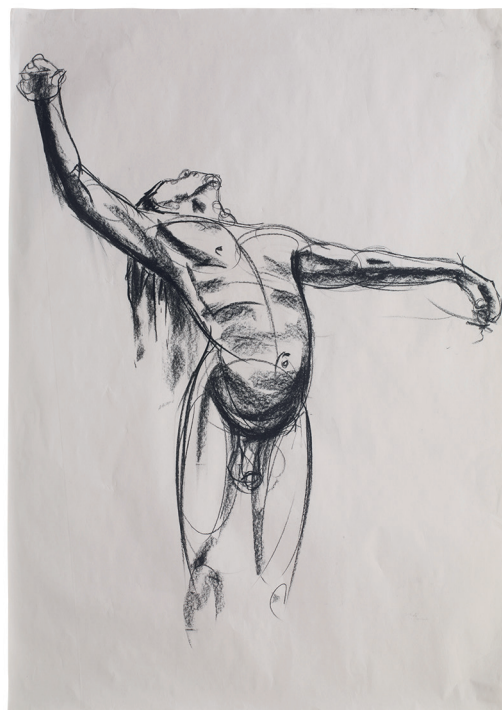
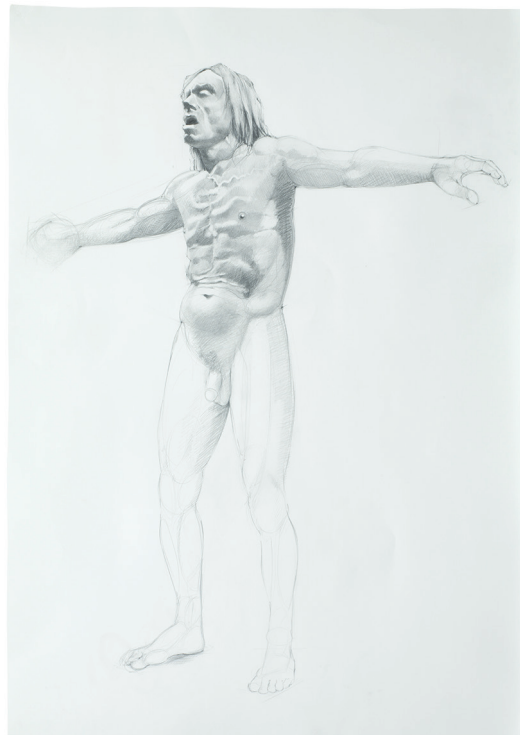




FIG. 1

Jan Gossaert

Netherlandish, ca. 1472–ca. 1533

Adam and Eve, ca. 1525

Black chalk on two sheets of paper joined together

Sheet: 62.1 × 45.9 cm. (24 ⁷/₁₆ × 18 ¹/₁₆ in.)

Walter H. Kimball Fund 48.425

Jan Gossaert's *Adam and Eve*, Unfinished

Emily J. Peters

A drawing of *Adam and Eve* from around 1525 in the RISD Museum's collection is so frank in its eroticism that one might not immediately notice that it is also unfinished (Fig 1). Traditionally attributed to the Netherlandish artist Jan Gossaert (ca. 1478–1532) and more recently to his immediate circle, *Adam and Eve* depicts the first man and first woman at the moment relayed in the book of Genesis when their sexual desires have been released as a result of their disobedience to God.¹ Gossaert shows his protagonists driven by urgent corporeal needs, and creates a physical and causal link between the origin of sin and its aftermath. Eve's body twists implausibly as she simultaneously grasps the fruit from the tree of knowledge and gropes for Adam's groin, her eyes all the while focused lasciviously on his face. Adam's actions are no less charged with the sins of the body. He teeters precariously on one leg and crosses the other over it while reaching for Eve's breast, his soul's turmoil revealed in the impossible bend of his body. His gaze is less focused than Eve's. He looks into the distance as if performing the gestures mechanically, driven by fate rather than desire.



2



3

FIG. 2
Jan Gossaert
Adam and Eve, [n.d.]
Pen and brown ink over black chalk or charcoal
Albertina, Vienna; inv. 13341

FIG. 3
Jan Gossaert
Adam and Eve, ca. 1515
Pen and black ink with gray wash, heightened with white bodycolor, on blue-gray prepared paper
© Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth
Reproduced by permission of Chatsworth Settlement Trustees

The RISD drawing is more than two feet high and one-and-a-half feet wide—a scale unusual in the Renaissance, and achieved by joining two sheets of paper together horizontally. The artist drew the figures in black chalk in a technique combining confident contour lines that define the forms with light hatching. The hatching, placed at sloped angles to the contours, was then blended with a stump (a cylindrical tool made of tightly wrapped paper) to decrease the appearance of the lines and create a rich chiaroscuro. Stumping is evident particularly on the nude bodies of the protagonists, where certain passages—such as the improbably Herculean musculature that describes Adam’s torso—take on the appearance of marble buffed to a high sheen. For all the polish of the bodies, other portions of the drawing are less finished. For example, on the rock upon which Adam sits and the tree trunk just behind his head and upper back the artist did not fully blend the chalk but instead left the hatching more visible. Parts of the upper third of the drawing, including a portion of the tree trunk, an extended branch with several fruits and leaves, and the twisting body of the serpent are shown only in outline, with shading left incomplete. This essay will explore what the drawing’s unfinished state tells us about its making as well as its possible function.

The execution of the drawing by Jan Gossaert’s hand has been disputed, but consensus remains that its composition must be of Gossaert’s invention.² It is simply unthinkable that another artist in the Netherlands in this period would have surmised the composition of Adam and Eve just so. The Fall of Man was a subject that apparently offered a compelling pictorial challenge to Gossaert throughout his artistic career. Four paintings and four drawings exploring the theme are extant—including examples in Vienna and Chatsworth (Figs. 2 and 3)—and each explores the sensual nature of the relationship between the first couple in a different way.³ While some antecedent to these highly sexualized renderings can be traced to the prints of the same subject by the German artist Hans Baldung (1484/1485–1545), Gossaert’s renditions are distinct inventions. Each of Gossaert’s drawings of Adam and Eve shows two nudes entwined in a desperate physical



4

contest of lust and guilt.⁴ Gossaert's body types and understanding of anatomy are unique to the artist, as are the visual references to classical sculpture and to Italian art, much of which hearken to Gossaert's extended trip to Italy in 1508–1509.⁵ Previous authors have drawn connections between the posture of Gossaert's Adam in the RISD drawing and the famous first-century BCE bronze sculpture *Spinario*, which Gossaert saw and sketched while in Rome (Fig. 4), as well as the figure of Adam in the *Creation of Man* on Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling.⁶ Proximity to Gossaert himself is further proved by technical evidence that

places the RISD drawing in the close circle of the artist. The two sheets of paper joined together used as the support for *Adam and Eve* each hold a watermark identical to that used for a drawing by Gossaert now in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.⁷

Close study of the unfinished portion of the drawing presents additional information about how it was made (Fig. 5). The outlines consist of abbreviated marks; the artist drew small segments and then picked up the chalk at the corners and the ends of curves. This type of segmented drawing denotes tracing, as opposed to a freehand rendering of form. These traced outlines played a structural role in the composition as a whole, laying a foundation for the forms intended to be obscured by reinforced contour lines and shading, as evident in the finished sections of the drawing. More than likely, the entire composition was traced and then gradually filled in by an artist working in sections. Since tracing was a way of transferring a composition from one medium to another, the presence of traced lines on the drawing indicates that there was another, completed composition from which the RISD composition derived.

FIG. 4
Jan Gossaert
Sheet with a Study after the
"Spinario" and Other Sculptures,
[n.d.]
Pen and gray-brown ink
Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden,
Prentenkabinet, inv. PK-T-AW 1041



FIG. 5
Jan Gossaert
Netherlandish, ca. 1472–ca. 1533
Adam and Eve (detail), ca. 1525
Black chalk on two sheets of paper joined together
Sheet: 62.1 × 45.9 cm. (24 ⁷/₁₆ × 18 ¹/₁₆ in.)
Walter H. Kimball Fund 48.425



While the presence of tracing could lead one to the conclusion that the drawing is not by Gossaert's hand but instead by a studio apprentice or a copyist, tracing was in fact common practice in artists' studios in the Netherlands, even by masters themselves. Because workshop practices of the period relied upon existing models repurposed for new compositions, extant drawings before 1500 are most often copies or repetitions of earlier compositions or of model books made for reference in the artist's studio. Gossaert utilized drawing as an integral part of his artistic practice, from sketches after life to compositional studies to underdrawings on his panels to finished works, and played a pivotal role in bringing change to drawing practices in Northern Europe.⁸ Despite his innovative approach, however, Gossaert regularly employed tracing in all facets of his artistic practice. His *Adam and Eve* in Vienna (Fig. 3) and another drawing of a nude couple, *Hercules Killing Cacus*, now in Frankfurt, as well as one of Gossaert's few woodcuts, *Cain and Abel*, suggest the use of a common model for the figures of Adam, Cacus, and Cain, achieved by tracing.⁹

Technical evidence confirms that Gossaert also made a tracing directly from the central Deësis group (Christ, Virgin Mary, and John the Baptist) of Jan van Eyck's Ghent Altarpiece in order to execute his own painting of the *Deësis*, now in Madrid.¹⁰ A direct tracing from a work of art of such importance is an idea incomprehensible to us today, but Gossaert often traced architectural elements from other sources onto the preparatory ground of his panels.¹¹ Rather than disproving a connection with Gossaert's workshop, therefore, the tracing on RISD's *Adam and Eve* actually helps to confirm it. The paper, with watermarks matching another drawing by Gossaert's hand, must have come into contact with a model, whether it was a painting or another drawing.

The fate of the drawing after its outline was traced is more elusive. The use of black chalk is rare for finished drawings in Gossaert's known oeuvre, and could suggest that the composition was finished by another artist, possibly even at a later date. Since the one extant black chalk drawing firmly attributed to Gossaert retains the linear quality of hatched lines without the blending with a stump, it can certainly be argued that the execution of the RISD drawing is anomalous in light of what we know of Gossaert's work.¹² However, relying upon the comparison of extant drawings from the Renaissance is necessarily unreliable, as we must accept that only a small portion of any artist's oeuvre has survived. Indeed, Gossaert's use of black chalk is mentioned by biographer Karel van Mander, who wrote in 1604 that the artist "made various fine drawings of which I have seen a number, well executed with black chalk."¹³

With these considerations always in the background, and without the presence of any directly related works, the question of *why* the drawing looks as it does has proven its most challenging and elusive feature. The one absolute in the study of Renaissance drawings is this: the execution of a drawing always relates to its function. Perhaps most striking about the execution of the RISD drawing are the ways in which the draftsman tried to achieve the chiaroscuro depth and sheen of painting. This quality aligns with the possibility, as has been suggested elsewhere, that the drawing served either to record a painted composition already made (*ricordo*), or to present a composition to a potential patron (*modello*).¹⁴ In this scenario, it is perfectly feasible that a member of Gossaert's workshop traced an original and then executed the chiaroscuro shading.

The possibility that the drawing is a cartoon (*cartone*) has also been proposed.¹⁵ A cartoon is a full-scale drawing used to transfer designs onto a painted panel, tapestry, or fresco painting. Gossaert would have seen cartoons on his trip to Italy, where they were in common use much earlier than in the North, and he may have employed cartoons for a select

few of his panel paintings.¹⁶ There is no pricking or other material evidence that the RISD drawing was used to transfer a design, nor is there a finished work to which it is related; thus, it is difficult to say with any certainty that the drawing was intended as a working cartoon. Perhaps the more informative context is one of form and intent, rather than function.

Around 1516, a set of seven tapestry cartoons created by none other than Raphael of Urbino (1483–1520) arrived in Brussels from Rome to be woven. The tapestries were commissioned by Pope Leo X to depict the Acts of the Apostles, and were intended to be displayed in the Sistine Chapel. Gossaert evidently saw the cartoons, as his drawing

FIG. 6

Raphael
Italian, 1483–1520
The Miraculous Draught of Fishes (Luke 5: 1–11),
about 1515–1516
Bodycolor on paper laid onto canvas
On loan from the collection of Her Majesty the Queen
The Victoria & Albert Museum, London
The Royal Collection © 2015,
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II





7

FIG. 7

Jan Gossaert
 Netherlandish, ca. 1472–ca. 1533
Adam and Eve (detail), ca. 1525
 Black chalk on two sheets of
 paper joined together
 Sheet: 62.1 × 45.9 cm.
 (24 7/16 × 18 1/16 in.)
 Walter H. Kimball Fund 48.425

FIG. 8

Raphael
 Italian, 1483–1520
*The Miraculous Draught of
 Fishes* (Luke 5: 1–11) (detail),
 about 1515–1516
 Bodycolor on paper
 laid onto canvas
 On loan from the collection of
 Her Majesty the Queen
 The Victoria & Albert
 Museum, London
 The Royal Collection © 2015,
 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



8

The Conversion of Saul, now in Berlin, depicts a figure whose source is clearly to be found on Raphael's *Death of Ananias* cartoon.¹⁷ Executed in bodycolor (a water-based opaque paint), the full-scale cartoons, most measuring more than ten feet high and twelve feet long, were drawn on hundreds of small sheets of paper pasted together (Fig. 6).¹⁸ The scale and drama of the designs was unprecedented, and they had an immediate effect on the spread of the Italian Renaissance style in the Netherlands.¹⁹ One can only imagine what it would have been like for an artist like Gossaert to experience this impressive project in person.

It is tempting to see the execution of Raphael's cartoons—with their hard outlines, sharp profiles, sweeping gestures, and dramatic chiaroscuro—as informing Gossaert's grand, if smaller-scale, *Adam and Eve*. Quite remarkable is the resemblance between Gossaert's Adam and the figure of St. Peter in Raphael's cartoons, specifically their facial features and shared emphases on a distinguished profile defined by a strong chin and beard (Figs. 7 and 8). Gossaert's Adam is unusually wizened in appearance, much like the older personage of St. Peter.²⁰ Such emulative comparison to the work of a master was the mark of an

artist interested in highlighting his craftsmanship as well as his intellect and ambition. If Gossaert did, indeed, intend to refer to Raphael's cartoons, he did so with full knowledge that doing so would appeal to his most important patrons, such as Philip of Burgundy, admiral of the Burgundian fleet (1502–1517) and bishop of Utrecht (1517–1524), whose sophisticated tastes also tended toward erotic subject matter.²¹

The unfinished condition of the drawing, however, complicates each of these possibilities, for no patron would have seen the drawing in this state. Heretofore unmentioned is the large repair resulting from a curved tear that dominates the upper right side of the drawing (Fig. 9). The repair was made by carefully adding a different type of paper at some point after the drawing was made. Used to mend the tear is wove paper, a type of paper made only after about 1750, creating a *terminus post quem* for the repair if not the original tear. Renaissance drawings were often intentionally cut into pieces, usually by later collectors or dealers. Typically this practice affected drawings that retained several sketches on one sheet of paper; separated, they were made more valuable on the market or in a collector's album. More unusual would be the intentional cutting of a finished drawing of this type. In this case, therefore, the tear suggests that some kind of damage or accident befell the sheet.

We must ask whether something happened to the sheet at the time of its making to render the project unfeasible. Would this explain the abandonment of the drawing, its unfinished state? While a collector of a later generation would have been happy to have a remnant of a Renaissance master's work, even a torn or repaired one, a loss at the time of the drawing's making may have rendered it unusable for presentation to a patron. Thus the tear and the drawing's unfinished state are potentially related.

Unfortunately, no art-historical skeleton key exists to unlock the answers to our questions about the RISD Museum's *Adam and Eve*, from the time it was conceived by Gossaert as a composition, to its execution and ownership thereafter. As this essay has shown, however, the unfinished status of the drawing can provide some insight toward these ends. The drawing was traced from another model and then filled in to its current form. The presence of tracing neither confirms nor refutes Gossaert's hand in the execution of the drawing, but it does suggest that the drawing played a role recording, or promoting, a composition. The affinity of the drawing to a cartoon—its handling as well as aspects of its style and ambitious size, especially in light of the proximity of Raphael's



9

FIG. 9
 Jan Gossaert
 Netherlandish, ca. 1472–ca. 1533
Adam and Eve (detail), ca. 1525
 Black chalk on two sheets of
 paper joined together
 Sheet: 62.1 × 45.9 cm.
 (24 7/16 × 18 1/16 in.)
 Walter H. Kimball Fund 48.425

cartoons in Brussels—presents a potential emulative function for the drawing. What we do know, for sure, is that the drawing presents a sensual feast for the eyes, one that emerged from a context of making almost five hundred years ago. In this, the drawing will remain as surprising as it is unfinished.

- 1 The drawing was recently published as by an unknown Netherlandish artist after Jan Gossaert in Maryan W. Ainsworth et al., *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossaert's Renaissance, The Complete Works* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 316–18, cat. 68. See also in the same volume Stijn Alsteens, "Gossaert as Draftsman," 89–103, especially 97. The extensive literature on the drawing includes Joseph Meder, *Die Handzeichnung: Ihre Technik und Entwicklung* (Vienna: A. Schroll, 1919), 390, 533, fig. 247; Heinrich Schwarz, "Jan Gossaert's Adam and Eve Drawings," *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 6th ser. 42 (October 1953), 145–58; and William W. Robinson in *Old Master Drawings from the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design* (exh. cat.) by Deborah J. Johnson et al. (Providence, RI: Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 1983), cat. 72.
- 2 See Alsteens "Gossaert as Draftsman," 97, and 316–18, cat. 68.
- 3 The compositions are *Adam and Eve*, oil on panel, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; *Adam and Eve*, oil on panel, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, The Royal Collection, Windsor Castle, on long-term loan to the National Gallery, London; *Adam and Eve*, oil on panel, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie; *Adam and Eve*, exterior wings of Malvagna Triptych, oil on panel, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia, Palazzo Abatellis, Palermo; *Adam and Eve*, pen and black and brown ink, brush and gray ink, and white gouache on blue-gray prepared paper, The Duke of Devonshire and the Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement, Chatsworth; *Adam and Eve*, pen and brown ink, over black chalk or charcoal, Albertina, Vienna; *Adam Accuses Eve before God* (after Baldassare Peruzzi), pen and gray-brown ink, gray wash; retouched (by Pieter Paul Rubens) with pen and light brown ink, black chalk, and cream oil or gouache, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam; *Adam and Eve*, pen and two shades of brown ink, over black chalk, Städel Museum, Frankfurt. These numbers differ from Friedlander's due to changes in consensus on attributions. Friedlander gave five paintings and four drawings to Gossaert, according to Max J. Friedlander in *Die Altniederländische Malerei*, VIII, Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1934, nos. 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 64, nos. 1–4.
- 4 Alsteens, "Gossaert as Draftsman," 92.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Schwarz, "Jan Gossaert's Adam and Eve Drawings," 161, no. 23, and 162. Alsteens also discusses these connections in "Gossaert as Draftsman," 316, no. 4. Other sources of the imagery include prints by Albrecht Dürer, whose snakes resemble that found in the RISD drawing, and prints by Marcantonio Raimondi for the general composition.
- 7 See *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures*, cat. 66, and discussion of watermark, 316.
- 8 Alsteens, "Gossaert as Draftsman," 89–91.
- 9 See Ainsworth, *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures*, 77, with discussions in catalogue entries by Alsteens (cats. 65, 67, 93) and Nadine Orenstein (cat. 117).
- 10 Ainsworth, *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures*, 216, cat. 29.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures*, cat. 72.
- 13 Karel Van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the First Edition of the Schilder-boeck* (1603–1604), Miedema Hessel, ed., translated by Jacqueline Pennial-Boert and Charles Ford, 6 vols. Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994–99. Quote reference is from fol. 226 r, 1604/1994–99, vol. I (1994), 162.
- 14 Schwarz, "Jan Gossaert's Adam and Eve Drawings," 160.
- 15 Meder, *Die Handzeichnung*, 390 and 533.
- 16 Ainsworth, *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures*, 74.
- 17 Alsteens, "Gossaert as Draftsman," 353–54, cat. 87.
- 18 Thomas P. Campbell, "The Acts of the Apostles Tapestries and Raphael's Cartoons" in *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 191–93.
- 19 Ibid., 187.
- 20 The face of Adam has also aroused much discussion. Alsteens makes the convincing argument that it is of an established Netherlandish and German type traceable to Albrecht Dürer's woodcuts (Alsteens, "Gossaert as Draftsman," 93); Schwarz suggests that it is a self-portrait in "Jan Gossaert's Adam and Eve Drawings," 167–68.
- 21 For an in-depth discussion of Philip of Burgundy's tastes in art in general, and in Gossaert's art in particular, see Stephanie Schrader, "Gossaert's Mythological Nudes and the Shaping of Philip of Burgundy's Erotic Identity," *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures*, 57–67.

**NEVER
HAVE I
EVER
FINISHED
SCHOOL**

SIEBREN VERSTEEG

Portfolio

45

/

68

Issue—5

objects are identified on page 66





Fall 2015

Manual















FIG. 1

Roman
Portrait of a Julio-Claudian Prince
(probably Drusus Caesar),
early 1st century CE

Marble

36.2 × 22.4 × 24.1 cm. (14 1/4 × 8 11/16 × 9 1/2 in.)

Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 22.211

Identity Recovered

Gina Borrromeo

We are looking at a head of a man (Fig. 1), carved in the first century CE from creamy white marble probably from the Greek island of Paros.¹ The smooth, unlined face indicates that the subject is young. His nose is strongly aquiline, and his lips are pursed, lending his face a serious, intent expression. Large eyes, upper lids overlapping the lower at the outer corners, are deeply set beneath fine, arched eyebrows. Above the brow line, the forehead bulges slightly. Comma-shaped locks of hair are parted above the inner corner of his right eye and change direction above the outer corners of both eyes. He has a prominent Adam's apple, and his head tilts slightly to the proper left. The facial features and hairstyle suggest that the subject is a member of the Julio-Claudian family, to which Rome's first emperor, Augustus (ruled 27 BCE–14 CE), and his immediate successors—Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero—belonged. The portrait is both unfinished and incomplete, but close observation and an important archaeological discovery help us identify the subject.

Roman portraits. Portraits, generally considered one of the Romans' greatest artistic legacies, were ubiquitous in the ancient Roman world. Patrons played a major role in determining the final form of a portrait, which was a purposeful presentation of its subject. In a letter to the parents of a young man for whom he was writing a eulogy (*Epistles*, 3.10), Pliny the Younger (ca. 61–113 CE) wrote: "If a sculptor or painter were working on a portrait of your son, you would indicate to him which features to bring out or correct; so you must give me guidance and direction as I, too, am trying to create a likeness which shall not be short-lived and ephemeral, but one you think will last forever."² A portrait had to represent not only the subject's physical appearance, but a lasting notion of the inner person as well.

Thousands of portraits in various forms, materials, and sizes survive from ancient Rome. Those created for funerary purposes took the forms of marble reliefs of freed slaves that lined the roads leading out of Rome, limestone portraits of elite citizens in faraway Palmyra, and painted panel portraits affixed to mummies in the Fayum, Egypt. Citizens across the empire kept portraits of deceased ancestors in their homes to honor their relatives. Those who had the means commissioned honorific portraits of themselves and of others. Often erected in civic contexts, these freestanding sculptures or reliefs highlighted their subjects' participation and prominent roles within the community. The most influential portraits, however, were those of the emperor and his family, which

were displayed in great numbers in public monuments throughout the Roman Empire. Communities often put up such images to thank the emperor for favors already bestowed or in anticipation of requested petitions. Members of the elite exchanged gifts of precious gemstones carved with tiny imperial portraits. Thousands of coins bearing likenesses of the emperor circulated throughout the ancient Mediterranean world.³

Emperor Augustus understood the power of visual imagery, and he was a master at proclaiming his accomplishments through art (Fig. 2). Portraits depicted him in various roles, including chief priest, military leader, orator, and hero. In all these versions, his face was similarly rendered: idealized, youthful, handsome, and serene. Not surprisingly, the emperors who succeeded him evoked his likeness in their official portraits. A strong physical resemblance to Augustus highlighted their familial connection and emphasized their dynastic succession.



2

FIG. 2

Roman
Portrait of Augustus, early 1st century
Marble (from Paros)
24.3 × 20.3 × 17.5 cm. (9 5/8 × 8 × 6 7/8 in.)
Museum Appropriation Fund 26.160



3

FIG. 3

Roman
Portrait of a Julio-Claudian Prince
(probably Drusus Caesar),
early 1st century CE
Marble
36.2 × 22.4 × 24.1 cm. (14 1/4 × 8 11/16 × 9 1/2 in.)
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 22.211

While portraits of the Julio-Claudian emperors are easily identifiable through comparison with Roman coins bearing portraits and identifying inscriptions, portraits of the different Julio-Claudian princes—the emperors’ sons, grandsons, nephews, and heirs—are notoriously difficult to identify.⁴ Idealized yet resembling Augustus and the current emperor, portraits of the princes fostered the impression of a unified dynastic identity. The RISD portrait has been variously identified as one of several different Julio-Claudian princes: Gaius Caesar, the grandson and adopted son and heir of Augustus;⁵ Drusus the Younger, the son of the emperor Tiberius;⁶ the young emperor Claudius; or his brother Germanicus.⁷ Because we lack documentation of this portrait’s original context, the question remains: *Who is portrayed?*

Unfinished. Minor scratches cover the entire surface of the marble. The left eyebrow and chin are badly chipped, and the nose is broken. Roman portraits were originally quite vividly painted,⁸ but time has erased the colors that were once applied to this head. Naturalistically rendered pupils and irises once enlivened the uncarved eyes. The eyebrows and eyelashes were delineated, the locks of hair colored, and the lips tinted.⁹ Such coloristic effects would have endowed the portrait head with a more lifelike appearance. The current condition of this piece—scratched, chipped, and bereft of color—betrays its two thousand years.

A closer look reveals that the crown and back of the head were roughly carved and the locks of hair are only summarily indicated (Fig. 3). The still-visible marks made with claw and flat chisels provide a sharp contrast to the smooth polish of the face. The ears, especially the right, are not finished; the marks of a point chisel survive unsmoothed. We are led to wonder, *Was the head actually finished in antiquity?*

Incomplete. A circular hole is visible next to the front of the proper left ear and a narrow channel marks the bottom row of locks on the back of head. Are these further indications that the piece is unfinished? Or do they suggest an attached component, now missing? Was the head once adorned with a wreath, perhaps of metal? A decorative feature such as this would have camouflaged the unfinished areas.

57

58

68

Issue—5

In its current display, this head is incomplete. The shape and form of the tenon indicate that it was meant for insertion into a separately carved body. A fold of cloth carved directly on the left side of the neck (Fig. 4) suggests that the head was attached to a body draped in a toga, the uniform of the Roman male citizen. Roman sculptors combined specially commissioned portrait heads with mass-produced bodies of different types: heroically nude, draped in togas, or clad in military gear, among others. Roman viewers read the naturalistic head as a portrait of a particular individual and the body as representing positive personal qualities that reflected collective social values.¹⁰ For example, a nude male figure linked the subject to heroes or deities, and a decorously clad female figure communicated modesty, beauty, social graces, and even wealth.¹¹

Honorific portraits of the imperial family consisted of a statue and an inscription naming the subject (or honoree), the name and title of the dedicator(s), and the date of dedication.¹² The inscriptions were often carved on marble bases or bronze or marble plaques. Over the centuries, portraits became disassociated from their inscribed bases, which were often reused as building material.¹³ Because our portrait's archaeological context is unknown, we will never be able to link it with its original identifying inscription or know the original setting in which it was displayed, although we do know that statues of imperial family members were seldom presented in isolation. This was especially true of the Julio-Claudian period, when they were often depicted in groups to emphasize that their power rested in their relationship to the emperor and to one another.¹⁴

In 1966, excavations in the Augusteum (House of the priests of Augustus) in ancient Rusellae near Pisa revealed an important group of eighteen Julio-Claudian portraits and inscriptions.¹⁵ A portrait of Drusus Caesar (also known as Drusus III),¹⁶ attached to a nude torso, was found with its inscription.¹⁷ This archaeological discovery secured the identification of portraits of Drusus III. It also allows us finally to assign a likely identity to the RISD head. With its wide forehead, large eyes, and aquiline nose, the Rusellae portrait of Drusus III is the closest parallel to the RISD portrait. We can now refine the identification of our Julio-Claudian prince to a specific one, Drusus Caesar, the second son of Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder and the older brother to the emperor Caligula.¹⁸



FIG. 4

Roman
Portrait of a Julio-Claudian Prince
(probably Drusus Caesar),
early 1st century CE
Marble
36.2 × 22.4 × 24.1 cm. (14 ¼ × 8 13/16 × 9 ½ in.)
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 22.211

4

Today, we are able to get much closer to the portrait of Drusus Caesar than Roman viewers in antiquity. Despite the head's current fragmentary condition and incomplete state, we can observe unfinished surfaces at the top and back, areas that would not have been visible in its original setting.¹⁹ As befits the posthumous portrait of the brother of the reigning emperor, it was clearly meant to be seen from below, and from some distance. To the Romans viewing the portrait in its original setting, this head constituted a finished work. The pragmatic Romans did not waste time or labor completing areas never intended to be seen.

- 1 Stable isotope analysis of a marble sample from the piece, performed in March 2002 by Robert Tykot at the University of South Florida, yielded stable isotopic values of $2.1 \delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $-0.7 \delta^{18}\text{O}$, indicating that its source was likely the Chorodaki quarry in Paros.
- 2 Eve D'Ambra, *Roman Art* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 94.
- 3 For a discussion of portraits, see D'Ambra, *Roman Art*, 93–125; Peter Stewart, *Statues in Roman Society: Representation and Response* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 79–117; Janet Huskinson, "Portraits," in Roger Ling, ed., *Making Classical Art: Process and Practice* (Stroud, Gloucestershire and Charleston, SC: Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2000), 155–68; Susan Wood, "Portraiture," in E.A. Friedland, M.G. Sobocinski, E.K. Gazda, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 260–75; Eric R. Varner, ed., *From Caligula to Constantine: Tyranny and Transformation in Roman Portraiture* (Atlanta, Georgia: Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2000), 9.
- 4 Charles Brian Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xvii.
- 5 Cornelius C. Vermeule, "Greek and Roman Portraits," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 108/2 (1964): 99–134, esp. 112, fig. 9.
- 6 Vagn Poulsen, Claudische Prinzen. *Studien zur Ikonographie des ersten römischen Kaiserhauses* (Baden-Baden: B. Grimm, 1960), 24 n. 44, figs. 7–9; Brunilde S. Ridgway, *Classical Sculpture* (Providence: Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 1972), 82–83, cat. no. 31.
- 7 Ridgway, *Classical Sculpture*, 83.
- 8 For a discussion of the scientific analysis of a portrait of Caligula retaining traces of polychromy, see Jan Stubbe Østergaard, "Reconstructing the Polychromy of a Roman Portrait: Caligula in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen," in C.C. Mattusch, A.A. Donohue, A. Brauer, eds., *Proceedings of the XVIth International Congress of Classical Archaeology, Boston, August 23–26, 2003. Common Ground: Archaeology, Art, Science, and Humanities* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2006), 512–16. On polychromy and Roman sculpture, see Mark B. Abbe, "Polychromy," in Friedland et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, 177–80.
- 9 See the portrait of Emperor Caligula in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Fig.1 and Figs. 18–20 for color reconstructions. http://www.digitalsculpture.org/papers/pollini/pollini_paper.html
- 10 Jennifer Trimble, "Reception Theory," in Friedland et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, 607.
- 11 Susan Wood, "Portraiture," in Friedland et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, 260–75, esp. 268–69. On a more practical level, combining individualized portraits with stock body types allowed Romans to save money and time when commissioning a portrait. In the case of imperial portraits, the practice of mixing and matching heads to bodies allowed sculptors to more easily keep up with the sometimes frequent changes in Roman rule. When a new emperor came to power, sculptors simply substituted a portrait head of the newly acclaimed emperor for the old one.
- 12 Steven L. Tuck, "Epigraphy and Patronage," in Friedland et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, 407; see also Jakob Munk Højte, "Roman Imperial Statue Bases from Augustus to Commodus," in Mattusch et al., *Common Ground: Archaeology, Art, Science, and Humanities*, 414–18.
- 13 Statues and inscriptions were also separately studied by scholars. Archaeologists and art historians focused on the statues, which received more scholarly attention in general. Epigraphists and philologists studied the dedicatory inscriptions and determined that most date to the first two centuries CE. Portraits of the imperial family were erected in great numbers throughout the empire, as attested by statue bases found in more than 800 different localities. Højte, "Roman Imperial Statue Bases from Augustus to Commodus," in Mattusch et al., *Common Ground: Archaeology, Art, Science, and Humanities*, 414–18.
- 14 Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period*, 3–10.
- 15 I thank Professor C. Brian Rose for bringing to my attention this excavated group, now housed in the Archaeological Museum in Grosseto. See entry on the group in Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period*, 116–18, cat. 45. Rose's important book, focusing on Julio-Claudian imperial statuary groups with archaeological contexts, examines portrait statues in relation to inscriptions.
- 16 For an image of this portrait, see Fig. 6 in http://www.digitalsculpture.org/papers/pollini/pollini_paper.html
- 17 The inscription reads: "To Drusus Caesar, son of Germanicus Caesar, grandson of Tiberius Caesar, great-grandson of the deified Augustus, by [municipal] senatorial decree, from public money." *Druso Caesari / Germanici Caesaris / f(ilio), Ti(beri) Caesaris Aug(usti) n(epoti), / divi Aug(usti) pronepoti, / ex d(ecurionum) d(ecreto) p(ecunia) p(ublica)*. See V. Saladino, "Iscrizioni latine di Roselle," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Egyptologie* 39 (1980): 215–36; see esp. 225–26, no. 20.
- 18 Both Drusus and his older brother Nero Caesar were next in line for the throne, following the death of Emperor Tiberius's son, Drusus the Younger (Drusus II) in 23 CE. The brothers were subsequently convicted of treason and put to death, Nero in 31 CE and Drusus in 33. After Caligula's accession in 37, he retrieved his brothers' ashes and deposited them in the Mausoleum of Augustus. He also set up statues of Nero and Drusus in Rome. Caligula rehabilitated and restored family members who had been banished by Tiberius, and both Rusellae portraits of Nero Caesar and Drusus Caesar date to his reign. See Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period*, 32–33, 66, 117.
- 19 In the eastern empire, imperial statuary groups were often displayed in the agora, where a common base was more practical. In the west, statues were often placed in niches. See Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period*, xviii.

How To

Uncut Robes from the 1920s by Kate Irvin



In these flat textile lengths from the mid-1920s, sparkling beads, sequins, and metallic threads coalesce into the vibrant patterns and engineered delineations of the tubular silhouette known as the “flapper” style. Referred to as “robes” by manufacturers and dressmakers of the period, these fabrics were created expressly to conform to the shape of a finished garment, with pattern edges clearly indicated.

These lengths would have been pre-embroidered and beaded in France, imported into the U.S. as a set of front, back, and trim pieces (possibly held together by a buckram band), and marketed to a local dressmaker to cut, assemble, and sew the pieces to fit a particular client’s dimensions. This process enabled a custom fit of up-to-the-minute Parisian fashions. For reference, the manufacturer/importer often included a line drawing illustrating the design as a finished garment. The dressmaker could show the image to her clients when discussing orders to prevent excessive handling of the delicate textiles.

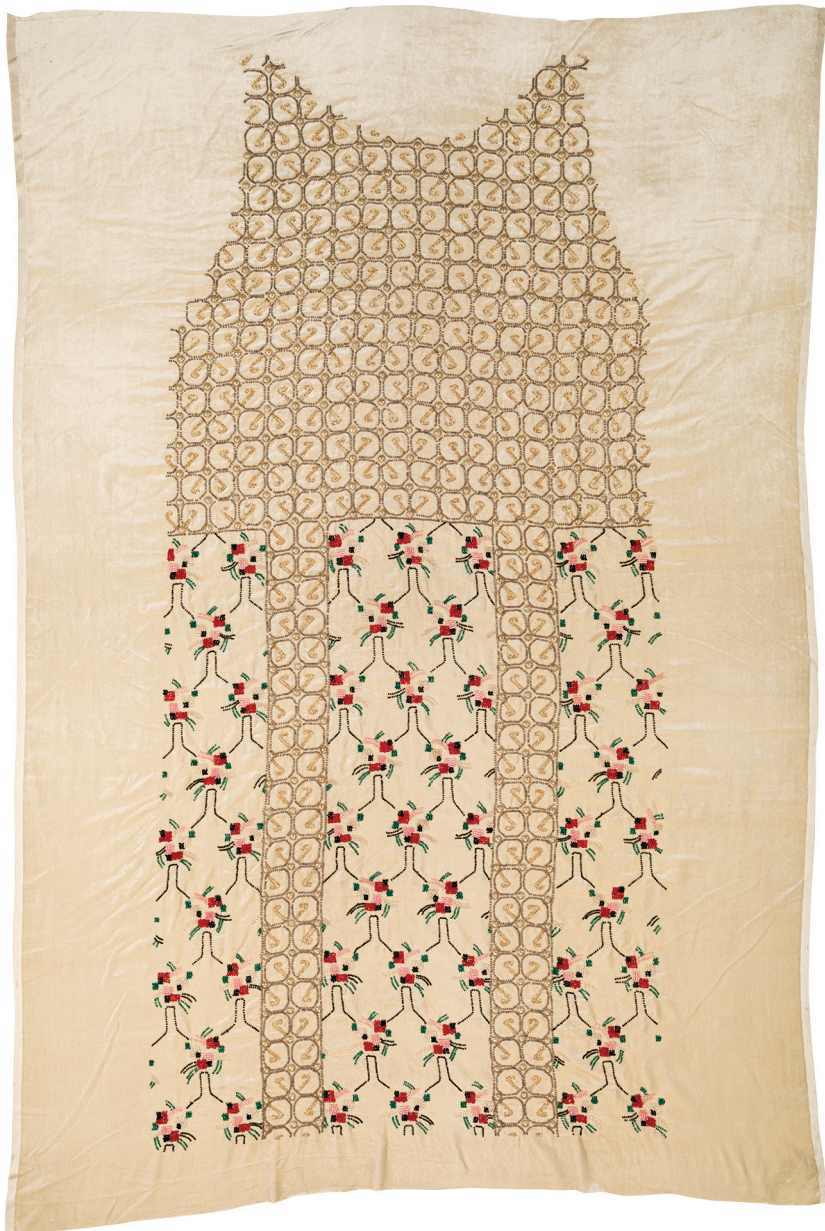
Surviving uncut robes are rare and, as a result, have largely been left out of 20th-century dressmaking history. The pieces in the RISD Museum collection exist intact as part of an unusual find in 1989 of the undisturbed contents of the A. & L. Tirocchi dressmakers’ atelier, a virtual time capsule that included textiles, fully fashioned garments, and business papers. Records from the Providence shop show that an assembled dress made from a robe cost upwards of \$100. Sisters Anna and Laura Tirocchi made use of robes as a design efficiency in the 1920s, when fashion and industry shifts compelled them to transition from making custom-draped garments to selling ready-to-wear items by the later 1930s.

61

/

68

Issue—5









How To (from pages 61–65)

French, textile manufacturer
A. & L. Tirocchi, dressmaker
Providence, Rhode Island, 1915–1947
Dress Panels, ca. 1925

From left:
Silk net embellished with sequins
and glass beads
Length: 127 cm. (50 in.)
Gift of L.J. Cella III 1990.129.57

Silk velvet embellished with glass beads
and silk embroidery
148.6 × 99.1 cm. (58 ½ × 39 in.)
Gift of L.J. Cella III 1990.129.40b

Silk velvet embellished with glass beads,
faux pearls, glass stones, and silk and
metallic-thread embroidery
Length: 139.7 cm. (55 in.)
Gift of L.J. Cella III 1990.129.39b

Silk plain weave with silk embroidery
81.3 × 92.7 cm. (32 × 36 ½ in.)
Gift of L.J. Cella III 1990.129.36

Silk plain weave with silk and
metallic-thread embroidery
Length: 162.6 cm. (64 in.)
Gift of L.J. Cella III 1990.129.53

—Directions—
Sew up the sides and head
and stuff with cotton.
Cut back board
so as to fit
bottom piece,
then sew
together.

Portfolio

(1)

Greek
Medallion, late 4th century–early 3rd century BCE
Gold with enamel inlay and garnet
Diameter: 7 cm. (2 ¾ in.)
Museum Appropriation Fund 29.256

(2)

Italian
Rene and Atala (embroidered picture), ca. 1800
Silk plain weave with silk embroidery and
graphite drawing
49.5 × 40 cm. (19 ½ × 15 ¾ in.)
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 05.001

(3)

Josef Breitenbach
American, b. Germany, 1896–1984
Artist and Model, Paris, ca. 1935
Gelatin silver print
Image/sheet: 22.9 × 26 cm. (9 × 10 ⅞ in.)
Gift of Peter C. Jones, RISD 1974 2003.147.2
© Josef and Yaye Breitenbach Foundation New York

(4)

Rembrandt van Rijn
Dutch, 1606–1669
The Artist Drawing from the Model, ca. 1639
Etching, drypoint, and engraving on paper
Plate: 23.8 × 18.8 cm. (9 ⅜ × 7 ½ in.)
Gift of Henry D. Sharpe 49.100

(5)

School of Katsushika Hokusai
Japanese, 1760–1849
Seven Sketches: Men and Red Wolf, 19th century
Ink and color on paper fragments,
mounted on paper
Sheet: 30.1 cm. × 22.5 cm. (11 ⅞ × 8 ⅞ in.)
Museum Collection INV2005.54

(6)

Eugène Delacroix
French, 1798–1863
Leaf from a Sketchbook, ca. 1820
Pen and iron-gall ink and graphite on paper
Sheet: 30.8 × 19.5 cm. (12 × 7 ½ in.)
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.501

(7)

Gorham Manufacturing Company
American, Providence, 1831–present
Florentin Antoine Heller, designer
French, 1839–1904
Mythologique Flatware Design Samples, 1894
Silver
Gift of Lenox, Incorporated 2005.118.42

(8)

Indonesian
Sarong, ca. 1900
Cotton plain-weave batik
106 × 189.9 cm. (41 ¾ × 74 ¾ in.)
Bequest of Miss Lucy T. Aldrich 55.483

